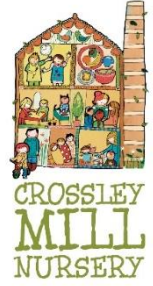


Sleep Policy

Last approved: 3 July 2026

Approved by: Nursery Management

Review frequency: Every 2 years



At Crossley Mill Nursery we aim to ensure that all children have enough sleep to support their development and natural sleeping rhythms in a safe environment.

The safety of babies and children sleeping is paramount. Our policy follows the advice provided by the DfE, the Lullaby Trust and NHS to minimise the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in babies up to 12 months of age, and sudden unexpected death in childhood (SUDC) in children over 12 months of age.

We make sure that all babies and children are placed down to sleep safely, with every practitioner reading the NHS advice on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)¹ and being made aware of the safer sleep guidance from The Lullaby Trust.

Babies/Toddlers Under Two Years Old

For babies/toddlers under two years old, we ensure that:

- Babies aged 12 months and under must only be placed to sleep on their back in a cot
- Babies aged over 12 months are placed down on their back in their own separate sleep space on a clear, flat, firm surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor which has suitable British Safety Standards
- If a baby has rolled onto their tummy, we turn them onto their back again unless they are able to roll from back to front and back again on their own, in which case we enable them to find their own position
- Babies and toddlers are never put down to sleep with a bottle to self-feed
- Babies under six months of age must always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep. We will monitor their sleep every five minutes
- For babies (over six months of age) and toddlers who are new to the setting we will have an adult in the same room for every sleep during the first few weeks, monitoring their sleep every five minutes, until we are familiar with the child and their sleeping routines
- Babies and toddlers are monitored visually when sleeping by looking for the rise and fall of their chest and if their sleep position has changed
- Babies/toddlers are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.

Sleeping Environment

- We provide a safe sleeping environment for all babies and children by:
- Ensuring every child has their own separate sleep space
- Only using safety-approved cots and other suitable sleeping equipment (i.e. mats) that are compliant with British Standard regulations
- Using a firm flat surface such as a cot, bed or mattress on the floor. Babies aged 12 months and under are only placed to sleep in a cot

- Using a firm, flat waterproof mattress, a clean fitted sheet and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering
- Ensuring the baby/child is placed feet-to-foot at the bottom of the cot, with lightweight blankets tucked in, if used
- Ensuring every baby/child is provided with clean bedding, working in partnership with parents to meet any individual needs
- Ensuring babies/children are appropriately dressed for sleep to avoid overheating
- Ensuring babies'/children's heads are not covered
- Ensuring no extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges or straps are used in cots; we will use sleep comforters for babies and children over 12 months only and follow The Lullaby Trust advice regarding the safe use of dummies while babies are sleeping
- Keeping all spaces around cots and beds clear from hanging objects, i.e. hanging cords, blind cords, drawstring bags
- Monitoring the sleep room temperature and ensuring it remains between 16-20C at all times, where possible
- Ensuring babies and children over six months of age are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.
- Ensuring babies under six months of age always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep and are checked every five minutes
- Ensuring babies who are new to the setting always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep and are checked every five minutes until staff are confident with their usual sleep patterns and sleeping style.

Further Considerations

- Well-fitted baby sleep bags may be used
- All bedding will be cleaned, as required and at least weekly
- In line with our safeguarding procedures, any child who arrives at the nursery asleep will be gently woken before their parent or carer leaves the premises.
- We will transfer any baby who falls asleep while being nursed by a practitioner to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest
- Any baby/child who falls asleep in a buggy, pushchair or pram while out on a visit will be transferred to a safe sleeping surface to complete their rest on their return to the nursery; coats, hats, extra clothing and blankets will be removed as soon as they are inside, even if this means waking them
- Staff who choose to smoke or vape must do so only during authorised breaks and in designated smoking/vaping areas away from the nursery premises, in accordance with our Smoke-Free Policy.
- When smoking or vaping, staff must wear a dedicated outer coat or jacket that is used solely for this purpose. This outer garment must be removed before re-entering the nursery and stored in a location that is completely inaccessible to children.
- Before returning to work with children, staff must wash their hands thoroughly and rinse their mouth to minimise the transfer of smoke or vapour residue.

- To further reduce the risk of third-hand smoke exposure, staff working with children under the age of two must wait at least 30 minutes after smoking or vaping before having close physical contact with these children.

We ask parents to complete forms on their baby's/child's sleeping routine with their key person when starting at nursery; these are reviewed and updated at timely intervals. If a baby has an unusual sleeping routine or a position that we do not use in the nursery, i.e. babies sleeping on their tummies or in a sling, we will explain our policy to the parents and not usually offer this unless the baby's doctor has advised the parent of a medical reason to do so. In such cases, we would ask parents to provide written permission to adopt a different position or pattern for their baby/child.

Sleep Duration and Waking Children

At Crossley Mill Nursery, we recognise that sleep is an important part of children's health, development and overall wellbeing. We understand that every child has individual sleep needs, and we aim to provide a calm, safe and responsive approach to sleep.

From September 2026, children will not routinely be woken before they have had the opportunity to sleep for a minimum of one hour, unless there is a specific health, safety or individual care reason for waking them sooner.

We have introduced this approach because uninterrupted sleep is important for young children. A period of at least one hour allows children the opportunity to settle into a deeper and more restorative period of sleep, rather than being woken shortly after falling asleep. During sleep, children's brains and bodies have time to rest, recover and process the experiences of the day. Good-quality sleep supports children's physical growth and development, learning, concentration, memory, emotional wellbeing and ability to regulate their emotions and behaviour.

We recognise that children have different sleep patterns. Some children may naturally sleep for less than one hour, while others may need longer periods of rest. Children will never be expected or encouraged to sleep for longer than they naturally need to, and if a child wakes independently, staff will respond to them appropriately.

Where a child remains asleep beyond one hour, staff will continue to monitor them in line with our Safe Sleeping procedures and will consider their individual needs and the nursery routine when deciding when they should be woken. We will not wake a child simply because they have reached a particular point in the daily routine.

Parents will be kept informed about their child's sleep patterns, including how long they have slept, and we will work in partnership with families where a child's sleep needs change or where there are any concerns.

The safety of children while sleeping remains our highest priority. All children will continue to be closely monitored throughout their sleep in accordance with our Safe Sleeping Policy and current safe sleep guidance.

Our aim is to ensure that children are given the opportunity to benefit from uninterrupted, restorative sleep, while responding appropriately to their individual needs and maintaining a safe and consistent approach to sleep at nursery.

Individual sleep routines are followed rather than having one set sleep time for all children. We create an environment that helps to settle children that require a sleep, for example dimming the lights or using soft music, where applicable. We will maintain the needs of the children who do not require a sleep and ensure they can continue to play, learn and develop. This may involve taking children outdoors or linking with other rooms or groups of children.

Staff will discuss with parents any changes in sleep routines at the end of the session and share observations and information if they do not receive enough sleep.

Sleeping twins

We follow the advice from The Lullaby Trust regarding sleeping twins, while working with parents to maintain their sleep routines and well-being.